



# Crystal Cove Historic District

Newsletter #2    Preservation and Public Use Plan — Crystal Cove State Park    May 2001

---

## ***Planning process explores how best to restore, preserve, and enjoy Crystal Cove's unique park values***

The California Department of Parks and Recreation is currently working with the public to complete the *Crystal Cove Historic District Preservation and Public Use Plan*. This long-range plan will recommend how we restore, preserve, and enjoy the cultural and natural resources of this unique area.

The 1982 *Historic District Development and Public Use Plan* defines our overall planning objectives: "First, to preserve and protect the special quality of this unique example of a Southern California beach community; and second, to provide full public use and enjoyment in a manner consistent with the preservation purpose."

## ***What we learned in Workshop #1***

Over two hundred people participated in Workshop #1, held April 26 at Corona del Mar's Lincoln Elementary School. During the meeting, State Park planners briefly outlined the planning process, planning resources and considerations, and the important role of public involvement in completing the plan. Most of the meeting was dedicated to hearing the public's ideas on restoring, preserving, and enjoying the cultural and natural resources of the Historic District.



Enjoying the beach

Twenty-eight speakers made presentations to the entire group during the ninety minutes dedicated to this purpose. The last hour was dedicated to one-on-one interaction between park staff and the public at six "issue tables" set up around the room. These tables focused on issues relating to cultural resources, adaptive uses of the cottages, natural resources, interpretation, recreational services, and the Investigations and Interim Protection Plan. We received forty-nine comments written on "post-its" notes at the issue tables. We also received extensive input from forty returned surveys and eight letters received between April 27 and May 10.



The old Crystal Cove Store

By reviewing public input from all these sources, park planning staff identified 283 separate comments. By organizing these comments into categories, staff produced the following public comment summary.

### **General comments, short-term cottage use proposals, and generalized long-term cottage use proposals**

This listing of public input represents general comments and short-term or generalized long-term use proposals for the cottages. The more comprehensive and detailed long-term use proposals are outlined in the use proposal lists on pages 3 and 4.

***Note: The numbers in brackets refer to the number of comments (but not necessarily the number of individuals) supporting that statement.***

#### **Recreational Facilities and Visitor Services [99 comments or 35% of input]**

- [15] Provide full public access
- [15] Provide day-use only and limit access and activities
- [12] Exclude visitor services or beach facilities
- [11] Provide traditional affordable public overnight accommodations

- [8] Limit development and environmental impacts
- [8] Have rangers live in cottages for security
- [7] Provide visitor services and beach facilities
- [6] Exclude overnight accommodations
- [5] Provide low budget hostel-like accommodations
- [4] No exterior lighting
- [3] Limit parking
- [2] Provide tent camping opportunities
- [2] Make this project environmentally sustainable
- [1] Provide RV facility

#### **Preservation of Cultural Resources and Values [63 comments or 22% of input]**

- [15] Fix up and use unoccupied cottages
- [13] Preserve the seclusion and character of Crystal Cove
- [8] Improve interim plan to fully protect cottages and landscape
- [6] Restore a few of the best cottages only
- [5] Remove all cottages
- [4] Remove cottages on the beach
- [3] Learn from others' preservation experience
- [2] Restore all cottages
- [2] Find funding from a mix of sources
- [2] Let civic organizations "adopt" and restore buildings
- [1] Do not rehab cabins at all as they are vacated
- [1] Restore cottages without conveniences
- [1] Do not let civic organizations "adopt" and restore buildings

### **See Web site for complete public comments**

To review the 283 individual comments, please access the Crystal Cove Web site at [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov) and:

- 1) click on "Find A Park"
- 2) select "Crystal Cove"
- 3) click "go"
- 4) scroll down and click on "Public Comments concerning the April 26 Planning Meeting."



The Boardwalk

### ***Education and Interpretation***

***[54 comments or 19% of input]***

- [13] Support arts center uses
- [9] Support general educational uses
- [9] Support environmental and marine interpretation
- [6] Provide visitor center and interpretive support facilities
- [5] Use cottages for scientific purposes
- [5] Provide educational meeting areas
- [4] Support historic interpretation uses
- [3] Learn from others to benefit educational programs

### ***Tenant Evictions and Rental Income***

***[30 comments or 11% of input]***

- [18] Rent cottages to current residents until a definite plan is in place
- [6] Lease cottages to current residents for long-term
- [6] Evict the tenants

### ***The Planning Process***

***[27 comments or 10% of input]***

- [13] Take the time needed to do good planning and to allow public input
- [8] Expand planning scope or redo existing plans
- [4] Keep the public informed and involved
- [2] Comply with existing codes and plans

### ***Natural habitats and processes***

***[10 comments or 3% of input]***

- [6] Restore and protect marine environments, processes and species
- [2] Restore and protect creek habitat
- [2] Restore and protect native plant communities

### ***Detailed long-term use proposals***

This listing of public input represents the more comprehensive and detailed long-term use proposals.

#### ***Proposals involving less than ten cottages:***

- ☐ Art Gallery
- ☐ Country Store
- ☐ Soda Fountain
- ☐ “Cottage Café”
- ☐ Tent campground
- ☐ Dolphin Birthing Sanctuary and Natural Preserve
- ☐ Education and Interpretation
- ☐ Environmental Preservation and Art Displays, Classes and Conferences
- ☐ Day Programs for Children with Special Needs

#### ***Proposals involving more than ten cottages:***

- ☐ Educational Center for History, the Arts, and the Environment
- ☐ Park Visitor Support, Educational and Arts Uses, and Public lodging
- ☐ Tenant/Custodians and Vacations Rental
- ☐ Overnight Accommodations, Visitor Center, “Hands-on” Building Internship, and Ranger Housing



- ❑ Overnight Accommodations, Art Center, Visitor Center, Park Operations
- ❑ Overnight Accommodations (regular and hostel), Nature Center, and Ranger Housing
- ❑ Interpretation, Youth Outreach Programs, Marine Research, and Park Support
- ❑ Rustic lodging, House Museums, Art Education, Marine Research, and Park Support
- ❑ Youth Hostel, Small Campground, Art Programs and Children's Programs
- ❑ Rustic cabins and a few tents for families, groups, and hostel users, Interpretive Center, and Ranger Residences



Walking north on the Boardwalk

## ***How we will use this input***

The planning staff has started analyzing the adaptive use proposals for the cottages based on public comments and the public benefit criteria listed below.

### **ACCESSIBILITY BENEFIT: Promotes full and equal access**

**Ideal:** Historic District is fully and equally accessible to statewide and local visitors of all ages, backgrounds and abilities.

### **CULTURAL PRESERVATION BENEFIT: Promotes preservation of the Historic District's and cultural resources**

**Ideal:** Proposal substantially and financially contributes to rehabilitation and maintenance of the District's unique cultural and scenic resource values.

### **NATURAL PRESERVATION BENEFIT: Promotes preservation of the Historic District's natural resources**

**Ideal:** Proposal substantially and financially contributes to rehabilitation, protection, and sustainability of the District's natural and scenic resources.

### **EDUCATIONAL BENEFIT: Promotes appreciation of the Historic District's cultural, natural, and recreational resources**

**Ideal:** Proposal substantially and financially contributes to the District's interpretive programs.

### **RECREATIONAL BENEFIT: Promotes enjoyment of the Historic District's scenic, cultural, natural, and recreational resources**

**Ideal:** Proposal promotes varied and appropriate recreational opportunities directly related to the District's resources and is compatible with beach, ocean, and other non-cultural activities.

### **OPERATIONAL BENEFIT: Coordinates with and supports on-going operation and maintenance of the Historic District**

**Ideal:** Proposal coordinates well with and substantially and financially contributes to a sustainable operation of the Historic District.

Based on our analysis of public comments and the above-listed public benefit criteria, park planners will develop three to four alternative public use and preservation concepts for the Historic District. Each concept will represent a different combination or intensity of uses for the District structures and areas. All concepts will reserve a core part of the District for

meeting the essential park services of public health and safety, resource protection, interpretation, and facility maintenance. However, the concepts will differ in proposed options such as overnight accommodations, educational workshop and research facilities, and modest visitor concession services.

In preparation for the next public workshop in August, park planners will be holding small stakeholder meetings with interested groups and individuals to discuss and modify these alternative use concepts. The complete range of possible alternatives will be presented at Public Workshop #2. In Workshop #2 we will “roll up our sleeves” and collectively evaluate the pros and cons of each alternative use concept.

### ***The Public Input Process***

- ✓ Workshop #1: Orientation, survey public values and ideas, and clarify range of alternative uses
- **Reporting results of Workshop #1**
- ☐ Workshop #2 (**scheduled for early August**): Present 3-4 alternative use concepts and receive comments
- ☐ Workshop #3: Present preferred alternative and receive comments
- ☐ Public review of and comment on preliminary planning document
- ☐ Park Commission considers plan as informational item or, if needed, as a General Plan Amendment

Following the second public workshop, planning staff will synthesize the input from the workshop into a “preferred alternative” that seems to best integrate access, cultural and natural resource preservation, educational, recreational, and operational benefits for the widest public. This alternative will be presented for public comment at the third workshop. The public will subsequently have an opportunity to comment on a written plan through the CEQA public review process.



Looking south down the beach

We heard your comments and adaptive use proposals at Workshop #1. It is clear we share one thing in common — a deep interest in how the Historic District is best preserved and opened to public use. We look forward to working with you during this process to create a shared vision that represents the highest public values, resource preservation, and uses for this unique place.

If you are not currently on our mailing list, and would like to receive the newsletter and notice about future workshops, or if you wish to send written comments, please contact us at this address:

CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS  
Alan Tang, Northern Service Center  
P.O. Box 942896  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001  
Telephone: (916) 445-8906

For park information, programs, and current work, please call (949) 494-3539.



Looking up from the beach to the bluffs

### ***Contribute to Crystal Cove's Historical Collection!***

State Parks is building a collection of artifacts and oral histories related to Crystal Cove to help tell the unique story of this area. If you would like to contribute historic photographs, letters, newspaper articles, objects, furnishings, anecdotes, or something else that can help tell this story, please contact the park at (949) 494-3539.

### ***Parks will stabilize and protect the vacant cottages***

One of the clearest messages we heard at Workshop #1 was that State Parks should quickly stabilize the six vacant cottages that have begun to deteriorate.

Many of you also expressed concern about the commitment and ability of State Parks to protect the cottages once they are vacated in July.

State Parks is committed to stabilize, protect, restore, and put to good use the Historic District's cottages. The first step in this process is funding and beginning stabilization work. Accordingly, State Parks has made an initial allocation of approximately \$1 million to stabilize and protect all the cottages. Cottage stabilization and security protection is projected to begin in July 2001.



One of the vacant cottages to be stabilized